

UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL
1 February 1985

AUTHOR TAKES WITNESS STAND IN HUNT TRIAL
BY JEFF HARDY
MIAMI

The author of an article involved in a libel suit by Watergate conspirator and former CIA agent E. Howard Hunt said Friday he has never been sued for the story by any other person or organization.

Victor Marchetti, also a former CIA agent, said he has written several articles, appeared on television and spoke at about 300 colleges and universities about American intelligence.

He said the CIA once sued him for a book he co-authored, "The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence." As a result, the book was printed with about 160 "blank spaces."

Hunt is suing The Spotlight for a 1978 article it printed, claiming he was in Dallas when President John F. Kennedy was killed and linking him to the assassination. Hunt was awarded \$650,000 when the case first went to a jury, but that verdict was overturned on appeal and a new trial was ordered because a judge's instructions to the jury were flawed.

Marchetti wrote the article for The Spotlight, operated by the right-wing, Washington-based Liberty Lobby.

He was one of the first witnesses to testify for the defense in the week-old trial. Hunt's lawyers rested their case earlier in the day and Liberty Lobby then moved for a directed verdict in its favor, claiming Hunt had failed to prove his case.

Defense lawyer Mark Lane had argued that Hunt's lawyers failed to show the article written by Marchetti linking Hunt to the assassination of Kennedy was written with malice or ill will -- the ingredients of libel.

He said most of the case presented in Hunt's behalf attempted to prove that Hunt was not in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, when Kennedy was shot to death.

"The plaintiff has spent a lot of time trying to prove he was not in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963, but that's not the issue," Lane said. "And there is a total absence of hostility, ill will or malice involved in the publication of this story."

U.S. District Judge James W. Kehoe refused to grant the directed verdict and the defense began its case.

Continued

2

Earlier in the day, Kehoe refused to consider contentions by Hunt's lawyers that Liberty Lobby had developed a "sham corporation" to avoid paying up if it loses the libel to Hunt.

Lawyers Kevin Dunne and William Snyder argued that the Committee to Defend Liberty Lobby was set up to divert money from Liberty Lobby's general funds and make it appear the organization had no money to pay off a libel judgment.

He said he would leave it up to the lawyers to determine if Libberty Lobby could pay off a judgment.

Hunt, 66, charged The Spotlight with libel for an Aug. 14, 1978 story that said he was involved in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The Spotlight article said a CIA memo indicated Hunt was in Dallas when Kennedy was shot. It also alleged Hunt was disguised as one of three "bums" who were questioned by Dallas police the day Kennedy died.